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Title: Orleans Parish Grand Jury Testimony of Peggy Landry and Nestor Joseph Landry Jr., 28 Jun 1967
Author: n/a
Pages: 26
Agency: n/a
RIF#: n/a
Subjects: n/a
Source: AARC

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ORLEANS PARISH GRAND JURY

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

Peggy Landry + Nestor Joseph Landry Jr.

JUNE 28, 1967

ORLEANS PARISH GRAND JURY

PROCEEDINGS OF

- JUNE 28, 1967

PRESENT: MR. JIM GARRISON, DISTRICT ATTORNEY
MESSRS. ALVIN OSER, JAMES ALCOCK, RICHARD BURNES, ANDREW SCIAMBRA AND WILLIAM MARTIN, ASSISTANT DISTRICT ATTORNEYS

MEMBERS OF THE ORLEANS PARISH GRAND JURY

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION

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Reported by:
Maureen B. Thiel,
Secretary, Orleans
Parish Grand Jury

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MRS. PEGGY LANDRY, a witness herein, after being duly sworn by the Foreman of the Orleans Parish Grand Jury, testified as follows:

MR. RICHARD BURNES:

Will you please state your name?

A. Mrs. Peggy Landry

Q. What is your address?

A. 6124 Laurel St.

Q. Do you realize that you are sworn to secrecy and anything that you say or hear in here cannot be revealed to anyone?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you call me at the District Attorney's Office several days ago to give me information?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Was that information that a person had been in your house and introduced to you by the name of Clay Bertrand?

A. Well, I heard the name so much and right now I am so confused that I really don't know. I can't say it is.

Q. Let me ask you this? What did you tell me on the telephone, did you tell me it was Clay Bertrand?

A. Yes, I told you I thought it was Clay Bertrand as I seemed to remember that name.

Q. Did you tell me that you recognized this person as being Clay Shaw?

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A. No, I said my husband saw this man, after seeing his picture and all, and he said it looked like the same man who was in our house. I had forgotten about it until my husband reminded me of the fact that this man was in my house.

Q. And then did you tell me on the phone, after this recalling, that this was Clay Shaw? Did you say you identified him from the deep tones of the voice and the general description and what you called bed-room eyes?

A. After seeing these pictures in the papers and TV, this man that was in my home had, what I, as a child, called bed-room eyes. He had sorta greenish-blue eyes, eyes that you wouldn't forget. And he had wavy, I call it kinky hair.

Q. And did you identify a similar picture, one which appeared in the newspaper labeled as Clay Shaw?

A. I didn't know it was Clay Shaw when I identified the picture. It looked like it could have been the man who was in my house. I am not really sure.

Q. Was the person who brought him to your house John Campbell?

A. Yes.

Q. Was this in relation with a request for you to give an affidavit about some school that John Campbell was contemplating opening in Metairie with Clay Bertrand?

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A. Yes, a military school out in Metairie.

Q. About how long ago did this happen?

A. About 1961 or '62 - I think '62. It was in the summertime.

Q. Who were the other people present in the house?

A. My mother-in-law and my father-in-law,

Q. And did you come to our office today and give us a statement?

A. Yes.

Q. And you have since been contacted by someone.

A. My attorney is James Gleason and I had called him this morning and told him I spoke with your men and they would get in touch with me today and he told me to let him know what I did, so then this evening he called me back and he asked me if I had heard from you all and I said yes and he asked me what happened and I told him everything I told you and he said that he would like to talk to me, but he didn't want me to say anything that wasn't true and I asked him what he wanted to talk to me about and he said as my lawyer and he told me that he was in the office with Sal Panzeca, and he said this office was representing Clay Shaw. Then I got all upset I didn't know what to do, I was caught in the middle.

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Q. Now you called the District Attorney's Office and agreed to cooperate with us and you realize that now you are under oath of secrecy and cannot discuss the contents of this case.

A. Yes.

JUROR:

Q. You volunteered this information?

A. Yes.

Q. How long was this man in your house?

A. About an hour.

Q. Could you elaborate on the purpose of the visit?

A. Well, you see this artist, John Campbell, was having a lot of trouble, he lives in Metairie, and he had a lot of pictures and things that he had painted or sketched - he had a lot of pictures and we had gone out there one night because he told us people were destroying his property and he wanted us to go out there and look at some pictures that he had out there. So we went out there and he told us he was afamous artist, he had painted President Eisenhower's picture, so went out there to look at the pictures. And when we got out there the place was all ransacked, they had stolen a lot of the pictures and the windows were broken and we never thought any more about it and then one day he called us and asked if we would sign a statement saying that

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we had seen this.

Q. How did he make the initial contact with you?

A. I met him through a police officer whose wife was a very good friend of mine and we were at their house ...

Q. You met him socially?

A. Well, not really socially, I met him at my friend's house and I don't know, one day he called up and from then on he started coming to the house, you know my husband would say come on over, you know how those things are, you say come and see us sometime.

Q. Was this man introduced to you as Clay Bertrand with him when he asked you to sign the affidavit?

A. This is the man who asked us to sign the affidavit. Not John Campbell.

Q. Did he purport to be an attorney?

A. Something about the law, he had studied law, or he was a lawyer. He did tell me he was a retired military man, either a Colonel or a Major, I can't remember exactly, but I remember that he did say he was a high officer, and we did mention the fact that my husband was a Sgt. in the Service.

Q. About what size was this man?

A. He was a tall man, he was very, very neat, very striking, he

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was a person that you wouldn't forget. He had/like I said, real kinky hair and a maroon sport jacket - they call them blaizers now - and it had a little emblem on the pocket, of the coat.

Q. What color was the kinky hair?

A. Sorta of a brownish and it had streaks of gray right in here.

Q. This was in 1962?

A. Yes.

Q. And your husband is the first one who called it to your attention?

A. My husband called it to my attention.

Q. But your mother-in-law and your father-in-law are unable to say whether it is the same man or not?

A. They know the man was there and what he was there for but they only saw the man a few minutes - they didn't even stay the whole hour, they left.

Q. Would you say the purpose of this affidavit was to collect insurance?

A. No, he was trying to get some kind of evidence - later on I found out this man was queer ....

Q. Which man?

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A. John Campbell. I am saying I found out he was queer, I assumed he was queer, because he tried to pick up two little boys across the street from my house, and when one of my neighbors told me that I was petrified. And that's when I told him don't come around anymore. We didn't want to have anything to do with him.

Q. Was that incident reported?

A. I didn't report it - my neighbor told me she was going to call the police, but I don't think she ever did, because she was real upset about it - he approached her two boys.

Q. What kind of car was he in? What car does he drive?

A. Now - I haven't seen John Campbell in years.

Q. At that time?

A. A little Ford, the '52 or '53 Ford.

Q. How did they arrive at your house that night?

A. In John Campbell's Ford.

Q. Would you know how to get in touch with John Campbell?

A. No. He never would tell us where he lived. He told us one time he lived on Broadway Street, he always came to the house, we never knew how to get in touch with him. And then another time he lived in the French Quarter. Now maybe my husband could tell you ....

Q. Now the place which was ransacked, did he own it or rent it?

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A. He owned the property.'

Q. Do you know where the property is?

A. I don't, but my husband can tell you.

Q. He was using it as a studio?

A. He lived there too, part of the time.

MR. ALCOCK:

This affidavit you signed, was it witnessed by any of the people in the room? Did they sign as witnesses?

A. No one signed, we didn't sign.

Q. You didn't sign them?

A. No.

MR. BURNES:

Q. You clarified the point - you had found out about his alleged homosexuality and had asked him not to come around anymore so you did not cooperate by signing.

A. Yes, that's right.

Q. He was in your house for an hour?

A. Yes.

Q. Was Clay Bertrand supposed to have any association with this military school they were going to open?

A. He was going to run it for John Campbell, the way I understood it.

Q. There was more than one subject discussed then, the paintings

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and the affidavit and the establishment of the school?

A. Yes, we talked about those things.

Q. You wouldn't sign the statement but you all spent an hour talking?

A. Well, my mother-in-law and father-in-lawwere there - you know, and we really didn't know what we were getting into. When this man came he started talking - he called first on the telephone and he said I am bringing this man over and he said we want you to tell him what you saw, I said what do you mean, what we saw, he said about the place being ransacked and the windows being broken and all. So I said to my husband and John Campbell hung up, before I could say yes or no. So when the doorbell rang it was the two of them at the door and my mother-in-law kept saying Peggy, don't sign nothing, don't you and Sunny sign anything, so we didn't sign anything. We took their advice, they were older.

Q. Did you read the contents of this affidavit?

A. Ididn't read it, my husband maybe can tell you more, I didn't even pick up the paper. Now where he had it, he must have had it in his coat pocket.

Q. Do you have any young boys?

A. No, 2 girls.

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MR. ALCOCK:

Q. Was there any indication as to where this man lived when he lived in the French Quarter?

A. The way John talked, he lived with him in the French Quarter. Just in conversation he said we live in the French Quarter. But he never would tell you where he lived, his address.

MR. BURNES:

Q. I remember that you had to call your husband from our office this morning concerning a difference of opinion between you and your husband, is that correct?

A. Right. It worked on my mind so much. My husband kept telling me its spossible this could have been the same man, and I am very nervous anyway, when he kept saying that I said well, maybe I ought to call the District Attorney's office, maybe it don't mean anything, but it might help somebody, and my husband was ready to divorce me, and when they subpoened me I can't tell you what he said ....

JUROR:

Well, we need people like you.

Q. Its a sad state of affairs when people do not want to be involved in the seeking of justice and we think you should be commended.

A. Well, I am not trying to hurt anybody. I don't know anything about Mr. Shaw. I don't know anything about Mr. Garrison.

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But this was on my mind and I felt like it was something - and in fact I didn't even tell my husband I called you all. I just told him that they were investigating John Campbell and Romero, which they were here. So, I might be put out!

JUROR:

You did the right thing. That is why there is a breakdown in justice because people do not want to get involved. That is why we are sitting here, without pay. I met John Campbell through this man.

Q. Who is Mr. Romero?

A. He is a police officer in Juvenile.

MR. BURNES:

The only final point I want to stress is that when Mr. LaBiche, the Foreman of the Grand Jury, gave you the oath, one was for secrecy, so now if anyone asks you you are not to discuss what took place here or what was said here.

A. Now, what do I do. Mr. Gleason was my attorney, I don't know if he still is or not. And this is why I called you this evening. I was caught in the middle, Mr. Gleason was my attorney. And he asked me everything that went on down here. And I told him. I told him everything.

Q. But this will only apply from now on rather than in the past.

A. What should I do, Mr. Gleason is my attorney, should I tell him?

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FOREMAN:

Q. Should she tell him?

A.(Mr. Burnes):

If she were charged in connection with this, she could, but you are not charged. I understand you volunteered to continue to cooperate with us and you will be available when we need you?

A. I did volunteer to come, all I ask you is this, please do not tell my husband that I called the District Attorney's Office, that is all I ask.

JUROR:

Anything you say in here is secret for us as well as you. We can't reveal anything either.

MR. OSER:

The Jury would like to know if anyone contacts you or specifically asks you what you said in front of the Grand Jury about anything whatsoever.

JUROR:

By name, we want to know.

MR. ALCOCK:

Mrs. Landry, before you go, please look at this picture and see if you recognize this picture?

A. Not that I recall.

Q. You don't think you have ever seen that person? All right, thank you.

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MR. MARTIN:

Before Mrs. Landry goes, I would like to clarify something. From the standpoint of the District Attorney's office and for the record. This morning when Mrs. Landry was in the office she was most cooperative, this was before the call, and even after the call, and she phoned again much shaken ...

A. Excuse me, may I say one thing, here I go again with my big mouth, but he (Mr. Gleason) asked me if anybody from the District Attorney's Office had called me, and offered me anything.

Q. What did you tell him?

A. I told him no indeed.

Q. Fair question and good answer.

Q. Now what I wanted to say to you and by way of apology, in line with what you were saying about the kind of person who does come forward and help justice, we were trying not to subpoena you today as you had mentioned this was your husband's last day off and you were going to the beach, and so on, later on we got to thinking about the fact that defense attorneys had already been in touch with you and in effect what it looks like is that I personallywent back to the D.A.'s office and went back on my word about the subpoena. It is not a good impression to leave in the mind of a person like you are/who is anxious to come forward, and we would not have done this unless

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we thought we had to change our minds, it was crucial.

JUROR:

He didn't have any choice, we insisted that he get you.

A. Well, you see I felt like I was caught in the switches because Jim was my attorney and I offered to help the District Attorney and when he asked me all these questions you had told me not to talk to anybody, I was caught in the middle. And I had to call and tell you that he had approached me.

JUROR:

Well, since he has been your attorney and is familiar with the Grand Jury proceedings, and that they must be secret, out of respect for you and not try to coerce you, I am sure that he will not try to ask you to say anything.

A. He told me he didn't want me to say anything that wasn't true. But said he did want to talk to me, but he wasn't telling me what to say.

Q. I don't think he would try to influence you.

A. Maybe he's not my attorney anymore!

FOREMAN:

Thank you very much.

A. Just don't tell my husband that I phoned the D.A.'s office, that's all I ask.

Q. Anything that you say.

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MR. NESTOR JOSEPH LANDRY, a witness herein, after being duly sworn by the Foreman of the Orleans Parish Grand Jury, testified as follows:

MR. BURNES:

Q. Please give us your name for the record?

A. Nestor Joseph Landry, Jr.

Q. Where do you live, Mr. Landry?

A. 6124 Laurel St.

Q. You live there with your wife, Mrs. Peggy Landry, and your family, is that correct?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Now, do you know John Campbell?

A. I know him, yes sir.

Q. Did you have occasion to have John Campbell in your home on more than one occasion? In the past?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you recall when he brought a man there to your house to discuss with you and your wife the signing of an affidavit?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. Since the investigation of the assassination of President Kennedy and the charging of Clay Shaw, did you have occasion to discuss with your wife that this might possibly be the same man as Clay Shaw?

A. I saw him on television when this first started and you all

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arrested him and another time I saw him on something else and I said the man reminded me of the man that was at my house.

Q. The first time you called your wife at work to tell her about it, when you thought you recognized him?

A. Well, I call her every day at 12:00 o'clock, and I told her he reminded me of the man that was at our house.

Q. Who else was present at your house at the time this person was there?

A. My mother and my father. They had dropped over that day.

Q. They are unable to say whether this is the man or not?

A. You would have to talk to them. I don't know.

Q. Have you had occasion to ask them whether ....

A. No, I am not on speaking terms with my father now.

Q. Was this person introduced to you at the time he was there?

A. He was, but right now I don't remember.

Q. Could you give us a physical description of the person?

A. If I am not mistaken he was a little bit taller than I was, he was heavy, he had gray hair and he was well dressed.

Q. This is the person you called your wife about and said reminded you of Clay Shaw?

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A. He was bigger than I am, he was a taller man.

JUROR:

How tall are you?

A. 6 foot, 72-1/2 inches tall.

Q. Can you describe this man's voice?

A. Not right off.

Q. Did he appear to be well educated?

A. Yes, he was. He was educated.

Q. Was his voice more or less deep, smooth? A big voice?

A. Well, he kept . . he was on the subject of the military, he kept talking about the Service, found that I was in the Service and he talked to me about his service ...

Q. What specifically did he talk about? Did he say where he

A. served ?

A. No, he didn't. He just told me he wanted to start a military

Q. school or something and he asked me what branch of the service I was in, and I told him, and I don't remember what branch of the service he said he was in.

Q. Did he say he was an enlisted man or an officer?

A. He sounded like an officer. Other than that I couldn't tell you.

Q. What is the name of the school he is talking about?

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A. The only thing I know was, Mr. Campbell had some property and I remember its on Canal, a block or two off, and I went with him one night with my wife , he come and got us and asked us to go riding and see his place, and somebody had broke it all up, I don't remember ... it was just about dark or dark, and we went there and he wanted to show us some pictures he had drawn, and that's why him and I got together because I like art. I am not an artist myself but I like to paint.

Q. You work for Dave Kern?

A. The one across the river. So I was trying to get myself started for Christmas decorations and he come in and showed me how to start up with art work by squares and how to get figures the heighth I wanted and things like that, and that's how I really started talking to him. So he said

Q. come on over and I'll show you some art work. Well, when we got to his place somebody had been in there and the place was all torn up, windows broken .... things torn up...

Q. Was that in Jefferson Parish? Or in Orleans Parish?

A. Jefferson, on the other side.

Q. Right near the Parish line?

A. Yes.

Q. At the meeting in your home did you get the impression, or did you learn, where this gentleman lived?

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A. No sir. That's why he had come to my house, he wanted me to sign some papers that he was going to write up that I was with Mr. Campbell and somebody had stole some pictures that belonged to him, or something, some barroom, something I don't know. And that's when my daddy told me when we were talking, he said, son, don't sign nothing you don't know nothing about so I told him, in fact, I had run him away from the house before this had started and he came around once or twice for fender work because his car was wrecked, he had a Ford coupe, and he wanted me to fix the back end on it and I said I am not interested. That's about the last time I seen him.

Q. Why did you run him away from the house?

A. Well, I kinda figured something wrong with the man, I was not sure.

Q. Queer?

A. Right. But he never said anything out of the way with me and I had met him with a friend of my wife's friend and I wasn't sure and I don't like to say nothing against nobody. But this particular time become to the house and started talking to the two young boys across the street and the lady

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called me across the street and told me she didn't appreciate my friends talking to her boys so when I went inside I just politely told him I did not care for what was going on and I did not want him to come back around, so I run him away and so he come back later with this man some two or three weeks later, but he has come once before - other than that I haven't seen him anymore.

JUROR:

The night he came, was that the evening you drove out to the house and it had been ransacked, or was that another evening?

A. That was, I would say about a month or two before.

Q. Before the two of them came?

A. Yes. It had something to do with the Jefferson police.

Q. You didn't read the document at all?

A. No sir. I didn't even want to look at it. My father told me leave 'em alone, my mother and father were visiting with me when they come there.

Q. What was the conversation about the school?

A. They were proposing to build the school on the property where Campbell had his house. They were trying to start an academy or something.

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Q. Were they trying to solicit you?

A. No sir

Q. To have your children attend?

A. No sir

Q. You don't have any boys?

A. No sir, 2 girls.

Q. Did they name a name for the school?

A. No sir.

Q. How was this man introduced to you?

A. It was a little rough - I was in the backyard or in the kitchen and Peggy said that he was there so I went to the front to talk to him and he had this man, he might have said his name, I can't remember, I asked them to have a seat and this fellow was talking and he asked me to sit down and he said I don't like to sit down and he said I want to talk to you, I said about what? He said somebody or something about the pictures being broken in John Campbell's place, and I said all I know is I have seen them and he said something that somebody had the pictures and would I go verify them. And I said well, I couldn't do that, but there is one picture that I know of and I remember to this day and I think I still have a print of it at home, one of the pictures that he drew, the (inaudible) , I admired the picture plenty.

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Q. You don't remember him introducing this man as Clay Shaw?

A. No sir.

Q. Clem Bertrand?

A. Sorry, I don't remember.

MR. BURNES:

Mr. Landry, when you came in you took an oath, and you understand that you can't tell anyone the subject matter of what you talk about before the Grand Jury either direct or indirectly . . . .

A. I don't understand.

Q. Anything that you may have told somebody prior to tonight's meeting with the Grand Jury is OK, that is before you came before the Grand Jury, but from now on this subject must be a closed matter to other people.

Thank you again for coming in.

FOREMAN:

We appreciate your coming in and again we apologize for making you come in on your day off.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I certify that the preceding transcript is a true and correct copy of the testimony given, under oath, in the preceding matter, before the Orleans Parish Grand Jury, on the 28th day of June, 1967, and reduced to typewriting by me.

Maureen B. Thiel

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